



*Weatherbird*

**Peter Evans/Cory Smythe (moreismore/Tundra)**

by Eric Wendell

Trumpeter Peter Evans and pianist Cory Smythe tackle and tame the tides of jazz, contemporary concert music and modern improvisatory practices through their music. *Weatherbird* showcases their melodic dexterity and the wide aural scope they are able to cover with just trumpet and piano. Stemming from a commission from the International Contemporary Ensemble, of which they are both members, Evans and Smythe use the famed 1928 title song by Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines as a starting point for their dialogue. The result is an all-too-brief album showing the breadth of which these masters are capable.

The album begins with that title track, perhaps the most fun the two have on the record, where they add a slight yet tangible bent to the song's original feel. The twosome follow with the Smythe-penned "Weatherbird Wave", which starts on a somber note and slowly opens to a classic feel before heading towards an abstract exploration of off-centered and extended techniques.

Evans' "Bsntbls" is the best example of how Evans and Smythe blend the something old of the Armstrong/Hines model and the something new that they can offer into an exhilarating pastiche. The beginning melody feels classic and unaltered but they almost immediately turn it on its head, utilizing trills and unusual sounds to give it a modern flair. A brief solo from Smythe towards the beginning demonstrates the aural spectrum that he can muster and is most certainly a highlight of the piece.

The duo's best use of space is Smythe's "Weatherbirdhouse", which features a 50-second introduction of Evans' off-kilter breathing and wild sound production to build towards Smythe's introduction of the melody, which has ample ground for Evans to cover over the course of the piece.

With only six songs, *Weatherbird* feels like an appetizer as opposed to a main course. This aural *amuse-bouche* will leave the listener wanting more.

*For more information, visit [moreismorerecords.com](http://moreismorerecords.com). Smythe is at Roulette Jan. 25th. See Calendar.*